

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 11-13, 15, 18-20, 22, 25-27, 29, 32 and 33 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 8 have been amended, and claims 2, 7, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 21, 23, 24, 28, 30 and 31 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter is involved.

Initially, Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 9, 10, 16, 17, 24, 30 and 31.

Claim 4 is amended to correct a typographical error clear on its face.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-8, 11-15, 18, 19, 27-29, 32 and 33 under 35 USC §102(e) as anticipated by U.S. published patent application 2002/0009296 to Sharper et al. (hereinafter, "Sharper"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 6 have been amended to recite that a unique identification code is transmitted through a physical connection (between the camera and flash device for claim 1 or between first and second hand-held terminals for claim 6). Sharper does not disclose or suggest the transfer of the unique identification code through a physical connection. On page 5, paragraph 2, the Office Action indicates that the feature of "the transfer of the unique identification code of the flash device being transmitted in advance through the physical connection of the camera and the flash device" constitutes allowable subject matter. As noted above, independent claims 1 and 6 positively recite that the unique identification code is transmitted through a physical connection.

While independent claims 1 and 6 do not recite all of the features identified on page 5 of the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 5 are patentable. In addition, although claims 1 and 6 do not explicitly recite "in advance", Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 6 positively recite that the unique identification code originally provided in the flash device (or second hand-held terminal) is transmitted from the camera (or

first hand-held terminal), which implies that the camera (or second hand-held terminal) has, in advance, that unique identification code.

Dependent claims 3 and 8 have been amended to positively recite features of claim 9, including a physical connection via a lead wire or contact points.

Applicant respectfully submits that Sharper does not disclose or suggest the physical connection features recited in amended independent claims 1 and 6, or their dependent claims. Thus, the rejection over Sharper should be withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 20-22, 25 and 26 under 35 USC §103(a) over Sharper. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 20-22, 25 and 26 depend directly from claim 6. Claim 6, as amended, is patentable over Sharper for the reasons stated above. Accordingly, claims 20-22, 25 and 26 are patentable over Sharper, and this rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Mario A. Costantino

Mario A. Costantino
Registration No. 33,565

Robert J. Webster
Registration No. 46,472

MAC:RJW/kxm

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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